

REAR GUARD

(A Fast Game For True Heroes)

For the ATARItm

by Neil Larimer

with thanks to Sparky Starks

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ATARItm TAPE LOADING INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Make sure the BASIC cartridge is in place and load using standard ATARItm CLOAD instructions.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you have problems loading the enclosed Atari tape, try the following:

- 1) Place the tape in a normal audio cassette recorder (not the recorder on your Atari).
- 2) Rewind the tape to beginning.
- 3) Press **PLAY**.
- 4) When the long tone is heard, hit **STOP**.
- 5) Put your tape in the Atari recorder and load as instructed above.
- 6) Be sure you clean your Atari cassette recorder head occasionally using any standard cassette head cleaner.

ATARItm DISK LOADING INSTRUCTIONS

WARNING: DO NOT WRITE-PROTECT OR WRITE DOS TO THIS DISK

- 1) Turn on the disk drive.
- 2) Wait until the busy light is off and then place your disk in the drive.
- 3) Insert the BASIC cartridge.
- 4) Turn on the computer. A menu of the programs on the diskette will appear.
- 5) Press **SELECT** to page through the selections on the diskette.
- 6) Press **START** to run the current selection.
- 7) Press **OPTION** to run the demo program if there is a demo on the diskette.

WARNING:

This is a copy-protected diskette. Any attempt to copy this diskette may damage your disk.

—An Open Letter From the Oldest Rear Guard Pilot In the World—

Well hello, heroes!

I hope the ladies reading this will pardon me. The reason I say "hero" is that it sounds better than "fool" and only a hero or a fool would ask for Rear Guard duty. I know they don't give you much training before kicking you into battle (it would be wasting effort on the doomed, I'd guess), so I'm going to use this letter to wise you up a little on the situation you've gotten into.

History majors may recall the Kamakazi pilots of the Twentieth Century Second World War. They were human beings who were literally strapped into craft that they crashed into their targets like guided human bombs. Don't cry, you're not getting strapped into anything — your enemy is!

You know those alien residents who look like blue jello and smell like a cow pasture on a warm day? Well they're up in arms about something, and have declared a personal war on the Construction Crew. The play they use is to make Cyborg ships by suspending their intelligent parts in a steel shell and pumping the half-living, half-mental ship full of spaceship fuel. Not a pleasant bath, but there's no accounting for aliens. These Cyborgs

wait in fleets of 60 ships for a Construction Crew squadron to pass and then pursue like crazed bats to try and collide with Crew ships. You are going to stand smack dab in the way. Sounds like fun, eh?

The C.C. squadrons need a Rear Guard because their well-known rebuilding capability is limited. With only eleven ships against 60 Cyborgs, the Crew can't rebuild itself fast enough to keep up with losses. When the last Crew ship is gone, there is no one left to build anything. You are going to fix that. Flying behind the squadron, you will try to disable enough Cyborgs so that at the end of the fleet's assault, there will be at least one C.C. ship left. At this point, each remaining ship will build a new defense shield for you and then your squadron will rebuild itself from space dust in preparation for the next fleet of Cyborgs.

You have two valuable weapons against the Cyborgs. The first is your craft. The Rear Guard ship is defended by ten energy shields, each of which will cancel one Cyborg on impact. To collide, you will move your ship up and down with the anxiety stick. (Actually the manuals call it a joystick, but I cannot understand why.) Look out for the terrain! Bumping into mountains is rough on your shields and worse on your ship. When all ten shields are gone, your craft is as defenseless as the C.C. ships so use your shields sparingly.

Your second weapon is the Guided Energy Dart. These darts will puncture the skins of the poorly-built Cyborg craft and destroy them. You are allowed all the darts you need with just one hitch: Your guidance gear can only control one dart at a time. If you launch a second dart while guiding a first, the first is lost. Only one dart is active at a time. You launch darts with the joystick fire button. You can pursue Cyborgs who are escaping by pressing your joystick to the right. It would be silly to slow down any more than you have to; there is no control for deceleration.

The Cyborgs are highly organized. They attack two at a time (or send one Splitter). There are 10 attack pairs in a wave and 3 waves in a fleet. Of the 60 Cyborgs, you must stop 30 to avoid loss of the last C.C. craft. The more you destroy, the more shields your squadron can build for you when the attack is done, so get as many as you can any way that you can.

Level 1 areas have slow Cyborgs with very little fuel and thick skins. Rear Guard ships defending in Level 2 areas have faster Cyborgs. This is due to a larger fuel supply and all Cyborgs above Level 2 will explode in a fireball when hit. This fireball will sometimes disburse if hit with a dart, and is dangerous to your craft and shields. Level 3 Cyborgs have been speeded up by reduction of the skin thickness and so only a single dart is needed against them. This single dart is a little harder to use. Also, Level 3 areas contain splitter craft which use a common fuel supply for two craft and are faster than regular Cyborgs. Level 4 is different from Level 3 only in that the Cyborgs in Level 4 areas have a dart of their own. These darts are larger than yours and are fired in groups of three by escaping craft. They will explode if hit but are easily missed and best dodged.

The Cyborgs in Level 5 are genuine monsters. If missed, they throw darts; if hit, they throw darts. They throw darts all the time.

Well, that's what it's all about. One last thing. When push comes to shove, it's better to go out fighting than to let your C.C. flock down. Oh . . . and . . . the reason that I am the oldest R.G. pilot around (for those of you who are interested) is that I retired a very long time ago. Good luck.

Signed,
Rusty Bucket